

Richest and Poorest.

Richest are they
That live for Christ so well;
The longest day
Would scarce suffice to tell
In what wide ways their benefactions fell.
Poorest are they
That live to self so true;
Their longest day
Brings but such good to view
As they may need self's service to pursue.

—Selected

Congregational Church Government.

Our church government is said to be congregational. The question has been asked, what do we understand by this? Indeed I do not know if I could give a correct answer myself. Inasmuch as many do not know and are yet inquisitive, and have also a right to know. We will attempt at least a cursory outline, expecting to be corrected wherein I may be wrong.

By congregational government do we understand that each congregation can manage its own affairs and do as they please, without any restrictions, and be responsible to no one. I do not understand it. There must certainly be a limit. Our motto is, "in essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty," and in all things charity. The essentials are contained in the Gospel. They change not. They are intended for all time; and adapted to all nations, and in these essentials we should be of one mind and speak the same thing. What the Gospel requires of one it requires of all. There should be unity of faith and practice. The nonessentials (that is not absolutely essential to salvation, but essential to good government) are the rules and regulations made by the church adapted to the times and circumstances in which we live. These may be changed as time and necessity demands.

What answered one hundred years ago would not do so well now. To carry on church work in the old way in this fast age of steam, electricity and printing press which are God's gifts to us, and which the enemy is utilizing to carry out his purposes, and which God's children have a right to press into service to counteract the evil, and propagate the good, we would indeed be left far in the rear and would fail in carrying out the grand designs of God.

What would answer in one locality might perhaps not do so well in another. Each congregation has a right to transact its own local affairs, such as deciding how many business meetings each year; when and how often preaching should be held; when and the number of communion meetings; the kind of food to constitute the supper; the building of meeting houses; the securing of a pastor; the manner of conducting Sunday Schools, prayer meetings and protracted meetings; the amount of charity, etc., and all matters of local interest. Each member also has a voice in the decision of any question. The congregation has the right to administer the ordinances of the Gospel, also to reprove its disobedient members for any immoralities or gospel violations. But in case the whole church should neglect her duty, because demoralized and violate the Gospel, then she becomes responsible to the general church to be corrected as the case may demand.

In all our dealings with one another we should exercise that charity, that should characterize every child of God.

JOSIAH KEIM.

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The Oriental Monarchies.

The ancient Oriental monarchies were: Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Judea, Phoenicia, India and Persia. With the single exception of Egypt, the seat of all the ancient Oriental nations was in Asia. Historical Asia is in reality South-western Asia. The earliest nations recorded in history arose in the three alluvial plains of the Nile, of the Tigris Euphrates, and of the Indus. This fact was wholly due to physical causes. In a primitive state of society population can gather into nations only in regions where a fertile soil produces abundant food. Here nature spontaneously produces certain arti-

cles of food, such as dates, rice, &c., which, being easily cultivated and yielding immense returns, made a large population possible. South-western Asia—including Egypt—is therefore called the "cradle of nations."

History, proper commences when historical records commence, and as Egyptian history is the oldest history we must begin with Egypt. Egypt may not have been the oldest nation but it certainly has the oldest history.

Ancient Egypt was divided into three divisions: Lower Egypt, or the Delta; Middle Egypt, or the Heptanomis; Upper Egypt, or the Thebais.

The old sources of information regarding Egypt were derived chiefly from the narratives of the Greek historians and more especially from that of Herodotus, who is called the father of history, and from some fragments of a history written in Greek by Manetho, an Egyptian priest, in the third century B. C.

The new sources of information is the art of reading the hieroglyphics, a term meaning sacred carvings, or priestly writing. This art of reading the hieroglyphics died out with the decline of Egypt, and "hieroglyphics" became a synonym for everything mysterious. The grand age of Egyptian history, the most splendid history of Egypt was from the eighteenth to the twentieth dynasties—about three centuries (1525-1200 B. C.).

At the head of the eighteenth dynasty is supposed to have been that Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph." The exodus of the Israelites from Egypt is believed to have taken place 1320 years B. C., during the reign of Meneptha, the fourth king of the nineteenth dynasty—the Pharaoh whose heart was hardened, and who was drowned in the Red Sea. From this period onward Egypt declined for six centuries, till finally it was conquered by the Persians under Cambyses, 525 B. C. In 332 Egypt fell under the dominions of Alexander the Great, who founded on its shore the new capital and literary and commercial centre called Alexandria. One of his generals, named Ptolemy, received Egypt as his fragment of the divided empire of Alexander, 323 B. C. Thenceforward for three centuries the Greek dynasty of the Ptolemies ruled on the banks of the Nile till Queen Cleopatra, the last of the line, being overcome by the Romans, died by her own hand; and the venerable land became a Roman province.

An important topic in this history was the Caste system, by which each individual, instead of being able to make his own place and fortune in the world, had his lot marked out by his birth: he had to be what his father was. Of these castes, or ranks, there were three broad divisions,—the priests, the soldiers and the lower orders. The priests were the richest, and most powerful, and most influential order. Their ascendancy over the minds of the people was wonderful. The military caste was next in rank of importance. The lower castes embraced the herdsmen, husbandmen and artificers. This Caste system was one of the main causes of the decline of the nation. It discouraged progress and improvement; it crushed out personal ambition; it produced dull uniformity: how could a nation prosper with such form of government.

The two most important cities of Egypt were Memphis and Thebes. Memphis was about twelve miles above the apex of the delta. Thebes was the metropolis of Upper Egypt and the most splendid city on the Nile.

Scarcely a vestige of Memphis now remains; but its great burial place at Gizeh is still seen. Here are the great pyramids, the colossal Sphinx and miles on miles of rock-hewn tombs. The traveler who now views these ruins of Thebes at Karnak and Luxor beholds pillared temples and statues of a size so colossal as to seem like works of giant hands. The distinguishing feature of Egyptian architecture is its vastness and sublimity. Avenues of colossal sphinxes and lines of obelisks led to stupendous palaces and temples, elaborately sculptured, and containing halls of solemn and gloomy grandeur, in which our largest cathedral might stand. In the vicinity of Memphis alone there are more than seventy of these great and grand pyramids. The most celebrated pyramids are those at Gizeh, being three in number

the largest of which is 450 ft. high and has a square base of 764 ft. and covering an area of more than 13 acres—twice the extent of any other building in the world.

In the construction of the great pyramids no degree of labor for any length of time seems to have intimidated the Egyptians. The huge blocks of stone weighing 1600 tons each, were dragged for hundreds of miles on sledges. The Egyptians embalmed their dead on account of a belief that at the day of judgment, the soul would reunite with the body; hence the care taken to preserve the corpse from corruption, and hence also the great pains taken to ornament the interior of their stone-hewn tomb, since, even while lying in the tomb, the body was believed to be not wholly unconscious.

A peculiarity of their religion was the honor paid to brutes. The dog, the cat, the ibis and the hawk were held in reverence throughout the whole land—other animals were worshiped only in special *nomes* or districts.

The highest honors were paid to the bull Apis at Memphis, and to the calf Mnevis at Heliopolis. The sacred animals were kept in the temples, and ministered to with the greatest care, and when they died, they were embalmed. If a person killed an ibis or a hawk, whether intentionally or not, he was immediately put to death.

As to arts and paintings, etc., they were skilled and even now we are imitating some of their patterns of wall painting. The great characteristic of her institutions were the unchangeableness. This stationary character is seen in their government, society, religion, art and learning, Egypt herself was a *Mummy*.

WM. F. HOSTETTER.

(To be continued.)

Orthodox Lives.

No man really believes any more than he practices. *Faith* is the most abused noun in the language, and *believe* the most abused verb. Men say they believe in Christ who do not show the first quality of his temper. Women say they believe in love who are exacting, selfish, vain, worldly, altogether unlovely. People are very orthodox in notions who are the greatest of heretics in their lives. The Jews never become atheists or infidels; but if you want to know what they really believed, read the twenty-third chapter of Matt.

In religion only that is believed which is lived. There is no Christian faith unless it makes a man a Christian, and that not in the head, but in the heart. If you call yourself a believer, and want to know whether you are justified in so doing, ask yourself this question: "What sort of a man am I?" And remember, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And this leads us to say that the Christian church should be vastly more watchful of life than of opinions. Let a minister swerve a little from the creed of his church, or from the popular interpretation of it, and he is promptly disciplined. That is well. But he may be of more than questionable integrity in business transaction; he may be careless of the exact truth; he may be unkind in his family to the point of cruelty; and who thinks of tabling charges against him? The result is that the world considers the church more anxious about orthodoxy of views than orthodoxy of life; and men of plain common sense are thereby alienated. Let the church keep itself free from heresy in life.

—PRESBYTERIAN OBSERVER.

A Few Thoughts.

You can't have pure girls when they associate with impure boys.

You can't have pure boys for them to associate with so long as you license the saloon to teach them impurity.

To save the girls the White Cross movement has been organized.

To save the boys the black flag must be raised over every saloon.

Father's don't weep over your own ruined daughter so long as your ballot is cast for license to ruin your neighbor's boy.

You sowed the tares in your neighbor's field, the wind or retribution bore the thorns into the flower-garden of your heart.—*Ex.*